

### Statement

*Copy of the Suo Moto Statement by  
the External Affairs Minister,  
Shri I.K. Gujral,  
before the Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha  
on the Agreement on  
International Transit of Goods  
between the Republic of India,  
The Islamic Republic of Iran and Turkmenistan.*

26th February, 1997

I have the pleasure to inform the Hon'ble Members of this August House that on February 22, 1997 in Tehran, India, Iran and Turkmenistan signed at the level of Foreign Ministers an agreement on the international transit of goods between India, Iran and Turkmenistan. This has brought to fruition the process begun in April, 1995 when the three countries signed a trilateral MOU on this subject. The three sides have worked together in a spirit of friendship, mutual understanding and constructive cooperation in finalising this agreement. Its signing reflects the traditionally close relations India has with Iran and Turkmenistan. It is also in keeping with the vision of the Governments of these countries to promote economic cooperation amongst themselves and with other CIS countries which accede to it in future.

The cardinal objective of the agreement is to provide a suitable juridical and legal framework for the multi-modal movement of goods from India to Iran and Turkmenistan, and other countries that join the arrangement in the future, and vice-versa. The salient features of the agreement are :

- It facilitates, simplifies and accelerates customs and other formalities including minimising documentation and inspection requirements for the transit of goods. For example, it provides that the goods transiting under this agreement will not be subject to examination through the customs jurisdiction en route except when irregularities are suspected.
- It provides for the exemption of import and export duties or other taxes for goods in transit. Only charges for specific services can be levied as stipulated by internal legislation and as applicable to all other countries.
- The signatories have agreed to examine the possibility of setting up a simplified visa regime for personnel engaged in the transit of cargo under this agreement.
- There will be a regular joint mechanism for supervising the implementation of the agreement, for recommending changes to it and to consider any other related matter.

The agreement meets the need for developing an efficient, reliable, dependable and cost-effective route

for trade and other forms of economic interaction between India, Iran and Turkmenistan and our other economic partners in the CIS region. My counterparts from Turkmenistan and Iran have joined me in underlining the importance of expanding and developing cooperative endeavours between our three countries in the field of trade and industry. I believe that the trilateral agreement on the transit of goods will be a key element in meeting this objective.

I am also happy to inform the Hon'ble Members that the President of Turkmenistan, His Excellency, Mr. Saparmurad A. Niyazov is currently paying a goodwill State visit to India. Discussions clearly brought out the identity of views on both sides on important bilateral, regional and international issues. The two sides have warmly welcomed the signing of the trilateral agreement on the transit of goods between India, Iran and Turkmenistan. They agreed that this landmark agreement would further enhance trade and other forms of economic cooperation amongst these three countries, and CIS countries which accede to it in the future. The agreement will foster a harmonious climate for multilayered economic cooperation and strengthen the cause of peace, stability and development in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to place on record our appreciation of the cooperation extended by the Governments of Iran and Turkmenistan in reaching this agreement and of the constructive spirit in which the officials of the different Ministries and Departments of the three countries have worked together in this regard.

### Indian Business Laws

3453. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Council of Arbitration urges to harmonise Indian Business Laws" appearing in the Indian Express dated July 12, 1997;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the memorandum received by the Government from various organisations in this regard;

(c) the details of action taken thereon; and

(d) the details of fresh initiatives/steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) The Government have seen the news report. Indian Council of Arbitration has not approached or urged the Ministry of External Affairs to harmonise the Indian Business Laws.

(b) Sir, No Memorandums have been received from any organisations in this regard.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) India has been member of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) since its inception. India has also passed comprehensive legislations namely; the Arbitration and Conciliation Act, 1996 modelled on UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration, 1985; UNCITRAL Conciliation Rules, 1980 and New York Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards, 1958. India has also initiated action for becoming a party through accession to the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sales of Goods that was adopted by the Diplomatic Conference, 1980 for which inter-ministerial consultations are going on.

#### **Titanium Industrial Complex**

3454. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Titanium Dioxide manufactured by the Kerala Minerals and Metals Ltd. has a big market for marketing in view of the new economic policy;

(b) whether the Union Government consider to assist the Government of Kerala to set up a titanium industrial complex at Chavara to meet the demand for the high valued Titanium based strategic and commercial products; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Indian Rare Earths Limited (IREL), a public sector undertaking under the Department of Atomic Energy, already has a major mining and mineral separation unit in Chavara in the Kollam district of Kerala. Further investment by Central Government directly or through IREL in Kerala is dependent on the availability of resources during the Ninth Five Year Plan.

#### **Report on Scams**

3455. SHRI MADHUKAR SARPOTDAR :  
SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE :  
SHRI PRAKASH VISHWANATH PARANJPE :  
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have prepared any comprehensive report on the various scams and corruption cases which have been investigated by the CBI during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) and (b) The CBI, which is an investigating agency, conducts investigations on a case-to-case basis, in accordance with the law of the Country. In cases where there is prima-facie evidence to substantiate corruption/criminal misconduct, it files charge-sheets in the concerned Court of law on conclusion of investigation and the law thereafter takes its own course. Therefore, preparing a comprehensive report on cases investigated by the CBI is not required.

#### **Demolition Operation**

3456. SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any demolition operation was carried out in Union Territory of Chandigarh during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the total number of houses demolished, the value of other destroyed properties and the details of goods seized by demolition squad;

(c) the provision of rule under which the demolition operation was carried out and whether notices were served and opportunity of hearing was given to the affected persons before the demolition;

(d) whether proper receipts of seized goods was issued and compensation paid;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps taken by the Government for the rehabilitation of affected persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[Translation]

#### **Sharma Committee**

3457. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI :  
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Sharma Committee was constituted by Delhi Development Authority in 1994;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith its composition;

(c) whether the Committee has submitted its report to the Government;

(d) if so, the main recommendations made by the Committee; and